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ALASKA *People*



JUNE/JULY/AUGUST 2003

BLM/Forest Service Say No to Co-location

When the Chugach National Forest approached the BLM last year about co-locating at the Campbell Tract, BLM took the proposal under consideration.

The Forest Service sent a proposal to Washington, D.C. that would replace BLM's current Campbell Tract Facility with a new, larger facility. The CTF complex

houses the Anchorage Field Office, Cadastral's field surveys branch, maintenance shops, Atco trailers and a 25,600-square foot warehouse.

In the meantime, Forest Service and BLM staffs met and took a closer look at what a new larger office complex would mean for the Campbell Tract. The 730-acre

Campbell Tract is primarily an administrative site managed by the BLM but its recreational attributes are the big draw with the public. On any given day you will find people recreating on its extensive trails system.

After meeting with Campbell Tract's user groups, acting Anchorage Field Manager **June Bailey** consistently heard concerns about traffic and noise. The proposed facility was projected to double the number of employees at the Campbell Tract from 150 to 300, meaning more people and disturbances to the environment.

Although construction of additional buildings and parking lots would have been confined to the existing footprint, State Director **Henri Bisson** said use patterns would change and adversely affect recreation on the tract.

The difference of Forest Service and BLM missions and lack of proximity of land bases, and the lack of public transportation to the Campbell Tract were other factors that led the BLM and Forest Service to decide that co-location was not the best option.

The AFO is currently working on a plan to renovate or replace administrative offices at the Campbell Tract. An open house was held August 26, 2003 soliciting public input. The draft administrative site master plan will be available to the public this fall.

Oviatt Takes on Resources

Now that the land transfer program is moving ahead at break neck speed, deputy state director **George Oviatt** of Cadastral Survey is turning his attention to other challenges in the Division of Resources, Lands and Planning. Effective August 18, Oviatt became that division's deputy state director. With more than 31 years of federal service in primarily the survey and land conveyance programs, Oviatt is looking for a change and experience in more traditional resource programs. He says, "It'll be a new challenge and I like doing something different."

Oviatt has been Cadastral's



George Oviatt

chief since 1992 and is credited with the success of BLM's Native contract surveying program,

developing strategies to expedite Alaska's land conveyance program and promoting the integration of traditional mapping into a geographic information system environment.

Oviatt is the latest change to BLM's leadership team this past year. New management appointments have been made for the Conveyances, Minerals and External Affairs posts.

Gust Panos, mapping sciences branch chief, will be acting DSD for Cadastral Survey until the position is filled.

Conveyances New Players

Gary's Dream Team.

A newly-structured division of conveyances includes (Front, l-r,) **Ann Johnson**, records section chief; **Sharon Warren**, adjudication II branch chief; **Ramona Chinn**, associate DSD, **Johanna Munson**, preparation and resolution branch chief. Back row (l-r) **Krissell Crandall**, adjudication I branch chief; **Dick Thwaites**, land transfer services branch chief; **Gary Reimer**, DSD; **Linda Resseguie**, senior technical specialist.



by Teresa McPherson

To say a lot is happening in the Division of Conveyance Management these days is an understatement. Guided by the Land Transfer Strategic Plan, DSD **Gary Reimer** and the Conveyances leadership team are building a detailed work plan to complete the land transfer program by the year 2009.

"We're reviewing our processes with the goal of finding a legally-sound way to streamline those processes," says Reimer. "We're also working with the Solicitor closely for sound and expeditious ways of handling large blocks of cases."

A key component of "2009" is matching the right

people with the right jobs. Conveyance branch chiefs recently interviewed candidates for a number of key positions, including State and ANCSA coordinators and three land transfer resolution specialists. "Finding the right talent to complement the existing expertise is the goal," explains Reimer.

Visit Conveyances these days and you'll see new faces, as well as not-so-new faces sometimes sitting in 'new' seats. You'll also see lots of smiles.

"I feel like I can see the light at the end of the tunnel," says land law examiner **Nora Benson**. "I like what I'm doing, and I have a boss with so much energy, it just rubs off on you." *McPherson is writer-editor for the External Affairs staff.*

Record Number of Students Working for BLM This Summer

Whether you can attribute it to the appeal of the School Business Partnership with the Anchorage School District, the student temporary employment program or student career employee program, BLM had a record 80 students working this summer. **Greg Balen** managed the well organized high

school recruitment program and 20 students before handing the SBP over to **Tonyua Abrom**, the student education program coordinator. Much credit goes to Abrom who has demonstrated a certain tenacity and zeal in the recruitment of students during her first year as student coordinator.



Tonyua Abrom

employee profile

If you want to know about outdoor recreation, **Lon Kelly** is the man to see. Recently, his more than 25 years of recreation experience garnered him the 2003 prestigious Frank Church Wild and Scenic Rivers Award from the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council.

This award recognizes his long-time service in river management, it commends his efforts in finalizing the Congressionally authorized Squirrel River study and final environmental impact statement while attending to a heavy workload.

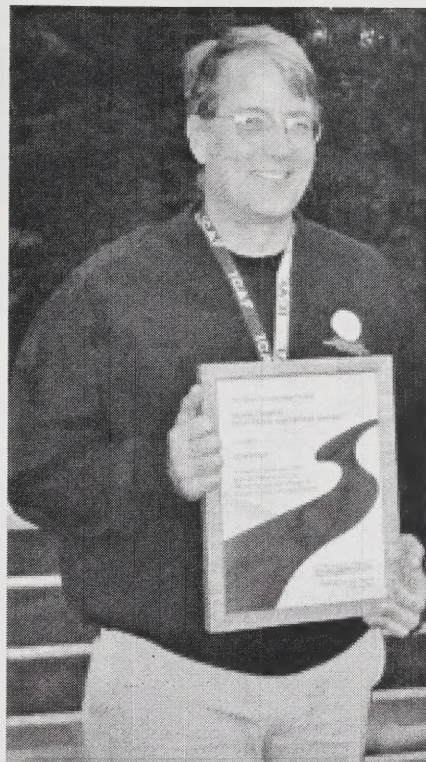
He also received high marks for his endeavors into lands/realty and environmental issues, instream flow and water rights assessment, special areas management, website design, mapping and writing technical reports.

You'd think that with his expertise Kelly wouldn't be surprised to receive such a high caliber award. But winning was unexpected for Kelly.

"I am honored and touched . . . To be the fourth recipient of the award is a real honor," said Kelly. "I am very surprised since this is such a compact field filled with people who have devoted their careers to this cause."

Just three years after graduating from the University of Michigan with a Bachelors of Science in quantitative methods of resource management, Kelly began his career with BLM. He was an outdoor recreation planner in Kemmerer, Wyoming, focusing on oil and gas related issues. Kelly was also the planning coordinator for the Pioneer Trails Management Framework Plan.

He's been an outdoor recreation planner for the Northern Field Office (NFO) since 1978. One job



Lon Kelly

Outdoor Recreation Planner Northern Field Office

responsibility doesn't seem to satisfy him, which may explain why he is also the statewide coordinator for Wild and Scenic Rivers Council. He works on instream flow projects and other river issues through the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council.

What is your favorite television program? I watch little television but I do like the news and if its Sunday it's *Meet The Press*.

Share some fond and/or fun BLM memories. My fondest memories include field examining the last group of homesteads to be patented in the United States. I enjoyed hundreds of days on the rivers in Alaska's Fortymile country. It was fun working on interesting issues on those rivers, from mining to commercial recreation. I'm having fun working on the North-

west NPR-A integrated activity plan and spending time on the North Slope.

What have you learned from working for the BLM? When compared with other resource management agencies, BLM gives small teams and individual employees a great deal of freedom to develop and direct field-level programs. BLM's current team approach combined with implementation programs continues our trend of pushing funding, work planning, and accountability to the levels where the projects that directly benefit the public are actually accomplished. No other resource management agency provides better opportunities for pogues like me.

What is BLM's weakest link? At the highest and lowest levels, BLM is focused on public service. But occasionally, generally in the middle levels of the organization, we lose our way. When that happens, bureaucratic expediency can trump more important tasks. I believe our weakest link is the lack of an adequate process to keep perspective on our assignments and direction so we can continue to work for the public good, rather than for the good of other parts of the bureaucracy.

What is your favorite website? My favorite website is Google.com. It is a valuable website and it is a door to tremendous amounts of information which has made my work effort productive and fun.

What do you like to do in your spare time? I am a certified flight instructor and I teach teenagers to fly gliders with the Civil Air Patrol. I like to hunt, fish and golf. During the winter, I teach snowboarding at Moose Mountains Ski Area. *Written by Sasha Marshall, External Affairs student intern.*



Field Specialists Charged by Bear

by Craig McCaa

Out of the still morning air, the brown bear charged the Northern Field Office employees. In a blur of smooth motion, realty specialist **Martha Woodworth** stepped forward, pulled her bear spray and gave the bear a warning blast. The bear kept coming. Woodworth let loose again, blasting the bear repeatedly until it stopped - only a few feet from her and her defenseless colleagues.

"Good job!" wildlife biologist Tim Craig told Woodworth. "Now let's get the bear rolled back into place. Who's next?"

The "bear," a rifle-range target on a cart attached to a long rope, was one of Craig's props used during the NFO's newly developed bear spray class.



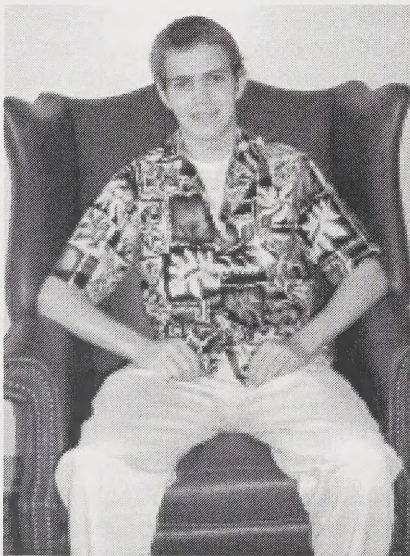
Martha Woodworth takes aim at charging bear.

Like other BLM offices in Alaska, NFP holds annual classes on bear safety and the use of firearms. But these courses don't concentrate on the use of bear spray which many NFO employees carry for bear protection during the summer field season. This is the first class where employees discharge bear spray under field conditions. "The main reason I wanted to do this class was that people buy this stuff and never try it out," Craig says. "It's expensive, and people are reluctant to discharge a can for practice."

Craig's half-day course includes a classroom session explaining the dos and don'ts of bear spray use.

McCaa is a public affairs specialist at the Northern Field Office.

Survey Student Scores Big Time!



Mason Victors

It wasn't enough that Survey's student intern **Mason Victors** won Alaska's TrigStar competition with a perfect score, but he went on to

win the national TrigStar competition. TrigStar is an annual math competition promoted by the National Society of Professional Surveyors and locally sponsored by BLM and other Alaska surveyors. Its purpose is to encourage high school students to master math and pursue careers requiring it.

It was through this competition that cadastral section chief **Jerry Lewis** got to know the mathematical wizard and helped him get a student internship with BLM this summer. As part of the competition, Lewis and **Ron Schwind** help administer the trigonometry test to competing local high school students. Anyone entering the survey and geomatics fields must have a solid foundation in mathematics.

"He's really a sharp kid with an

outstanding work ethic," says Lewis. Recently Cadastral Survey surprised Victors with an award and gift certificate in recognition of his hard work and his trigonometry prowess. Acting DSD for Survey **Gust Panos**, State Director **Henri Bisson** and TrigStar official George Strother was on hand.

Victors received \$250 and a scientific calculator for his Alaska TrigStar win and \$1,000 and an expense paid trip to Nashville for winning the national award. This fall he returns to Chugiak High School as a junior. He professes a great love of math and plans to become an aerospace engineer. This doesn't concern Lewis. He hopes Victors will continue working for BLM as long as he can and encourage his math buddies to come and work too.



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What's

so GOOD About

Working for BLM?

.....

Student intern wants to know

by Sasha Marshall

If you walk through cubicles, look through old issues of *Alaska People* or *Frontiers*, you may see old pictures of employees who still work for BLM. Why are they here? What's so good about BLM? Employees working here for a long time may have forgotten the importance of BLM in their lives. This article is a reminder to what BLM means to many employees.

Brenda Takes Horse, BLM's Native liaison, has worked for more than 20 years for the BLM. She originally wanted a job but stayed because her job became an enjoyable career.

She likes the annual leave she receives. She earns a day of annual leave per pay period while new employees earn four hours of sick leave and four hours of annual leave. The annual leave increases to six hours per pay period at three years of employment, and increases to 8 hours at 15 years of employment.

Employees in private industry often get two weeks of annual leave but long time BLM employees can earn up to six weeks.

Takes Horse said she could make more money working for the private sector. "My salary would be better, but I stick to my priorities and making money is not one of them. As a Native liaison, I help the Native community in my own small way, so I feel like I am helping my family," she said.

Stability is valued by many



Sasha Marshall

Student intern **Sasha Marshall** says it's definitely the people that made her working experience in External Affairs so memorable. The Texas native has returned to Oklahoma to finish her senior year at Langston College and she says she hopes to return to Alaska. When told of the plentiful public affairs job opportunities at the Department of Defense, she said, "Oh no, I want to work for BLM."

employees who weigh it when considering comparable jobs in the private sector. Private sector employees can have salaries three times that of federal employees but they are usually more vulnerable to lay-offs.

Another incentive for those coming to work for BLM is the 25% Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) added to everyone's pay. This tax

free money is bonus for all Alaska federal employees to compensate them for the high cost of living in Alaska.

Other job incentives include financial, child care, counseling, transportation and legal services provided by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Jim Ducker, environmental program analyst, is another employee with more than 20 years with BLM who agrees with Takes Horse about job stability in the government.

"Good pay and stability are some of the reasons why I have stayed with BLM," Ducker said. "The job stays interesting and has different focuses. I have learned different skills and about Alaska.

"My experience has been filled with a good bunch of people I work with. They are very sharp and are friends as well as co-workers," said Ducker.

Not only do long-time employees sing the praises of BLM but so do new hires like **Thom Jennings**. He's a land law examiner with Conveyances and he says BLM is an attractive work place because of its challenging work and professional atmosphere.

Jennings has several years of military service doing audio and visual work. He was also a computer instructor in retail. He says having a dependable and regular work schedule means a lot to him. He adds, "People at BLM create a good work environment so I am impressed by them," he said.

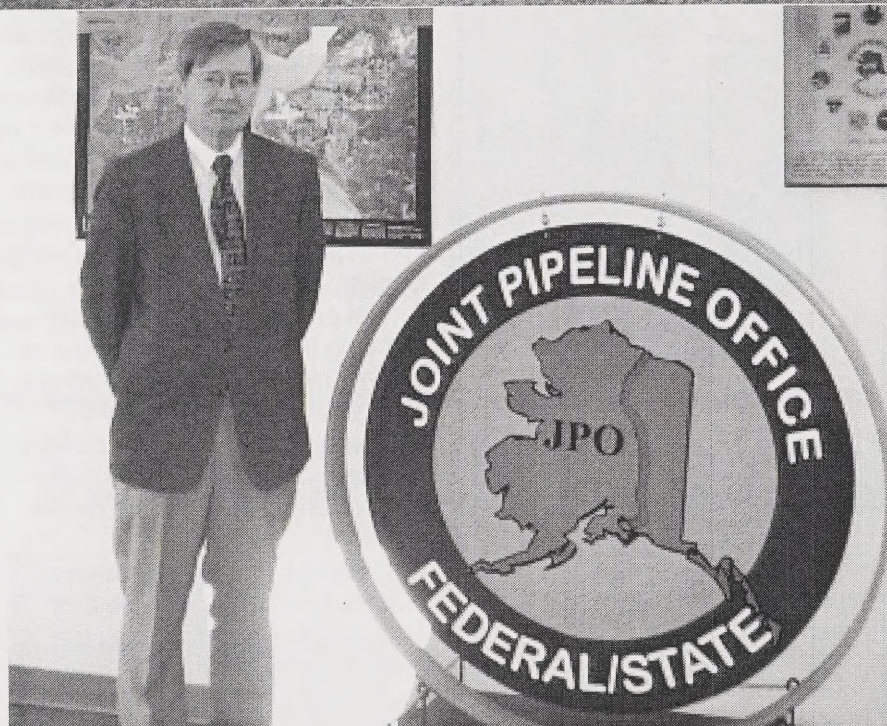
He likes that he can manage his own work. His job doesn't stress deadlines; instead, accuracy and quality are the main focus.

So just think job security, great people, good pay, flexible work schedule, benefits and the satisfaction of protecting government lands for public use make BLM a good place to work.

Written by Sasha Marshall, a student intern with External Affairs.



The Charmed Life of Don Keyes



Don Keyes

by Rhea DoBosh

I don't know if **Don Keyes** has led a charmed life but I know he's certainly had an interesting one. As a fan and long time co-worker, I think Don was the right guy at the right place, at the right time, and I'll tell you why. Don's made so many significant and novel engineering contributions to ensure the safety and integrity of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. A long time employee of the Joint Pipeline Office, Keyes, an engineer extraordinaire is known for his consistently high quality

work. He's the guy who oversaw pipeline audits throughout the '90s, was the lead engineer on the rerouting of the pipeline at Atigun Pass, involved with the corrosion protection program and has mentored many joint pipeline employees.

Like many of us, Keyes took a circuitous route to Alaska. He started in North Dakota graduating from the University of North Dakota with a degree in Civil Engineering. Next was California where he was

engineer for the Oroville Dam construction. "The dam is the highest earthfill dam in the world. Approximately 80 million cubic yards of fill material was used for the dam, about the same amount of material needed to construct the Haul Road and work pads for TAPS," says Keyes. He then worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers then BLM in the pipeline division in Fairbanks. This was an exciting time, there was planning for haul road design, pipeline pre-construction, and plan reviews for an undeveloped arctic environment. If you were an engineer, Alaska was the place to be.

There are very few "pipeliners" from the '70s still around. There are even fewer that have made such an impact. "I have had a fantastic opportunity, says Keyes. I knew how important TAPS was to the state and the nation and I was proud to aid in the development of Alaska."

In the 1970s Keyes enrolled into classes in the new field of arctic engineering at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. "This was an opportunity to learn arctic engineering. I took the very first

Photos. Top- Don Keyes at Denali Fault. Below-Keyes at the entrance of joint pipeline offices.

continued, from page 6

course offered. It was so new, they didn't even have a course book, — we had to write the book."

His place in JPO history was secured when as TAPS construction coordinator he oversaw construction of the 57-mile road north of Livengood.

As contributor to the original TAPs engineering design and seismic safeguard at the Denali Fault Keyes was especially proud of how the pipeline held up to last November's 7.9 earthquake. The pipeline is often referred as a modern marvel and the earthquake proved that. Keyes has been monitoring this area for the past 30 years and he says that once the earthquake data is studied, engineering adjustments will be made to continue

New Glennallen Offices Soon

by K.J. Mushovic

By the end of the year, the Glennallen Field Office staff should be moving from its present offices to new digs. BLM has contracted with F- E Contracting of Palmer to construct a 2,500-square foot office building and to enlarge two parking lots at the Glennallen Field Office site. Copper Valley Construction Company has been subcontracted to do site preparation which includes grubbing and removing trees and excavating for utilities.

The new building will replace a 1955 log structure built by Judge Henderson and retired BLM employee Fred Rungee. The 48-year old building has endured its share of renovations. It once had living quarters with a kitchen, a basement, and a back porch. Once the new building is complete plans are for the old structure to be moved from its present location and donated to the Chamber of Commerce. *Mushovic is an outdoor recreation planner at the Glennallen Field Office.*

to improve the system.

Keyes retired from BLM in June, but his legacy will live on, through the JPO employ-

ees of today and tomorrow.

DoBosh is the public affairs officer for the State of Alaska at the Joint Pipeline.

COOL NEWS



Bisson's Bombers? The Alaska State Office (ASO) softball team beat the Joint Pipeline Office softball team 20-13 at the big soft ball game at the All Employees Meeting/Picnic on August 27 at the Kincaid Park Chalet. The softball challenge was lobbied by JPO's **Linda Heitstuman**. Look for more picnic/meeting news in the next Alaska People.

ASO softball team players. Front row (l-r) Skyler Poff, Georgia Holton, Craig Frichtl, Asa Winchester, Henri Bisson, Robin Rodriguez, Tiffany Martinez. Back row (l-r) Thom Jennings, Jill Cubbedge, Rob Brumbaugh, Ron Onyon, Steve Stokke, Mike Haskins and Eileen Ford.

Campbell Tract Trails Get a "Workout"

by Sasha Marshall



"Healthy Trails, Healthy People" was this year's theme for the National Trails Day at the BLM's Campbell Creek Science Center.

On June 7, volunteers planted 1,000 white spruce saplings to fill out vegetation to the edge of the road. Topsoil and a blend of native grass seeds were used to narrow

trails. Volunteers completed a section of the Coyote Trail by raking a final layer of gravel on the ground. A fence surrounds and protects the young saplings from equestrians, bike riders and cars.

"I like to hike and use the trails. Volunteering is a good way to give back to the trails," said Louise Williams, 24, of Washington D.C.

Lilly Goodman, guest speaker with the State's Fish and Game spoke about bear and moose safety. National Trails Day began nine years ago at the Campbell Tract with volunteers creating dog-mushing trails.

Public lands and trail users don't have to wait for a volunteer event to help maintain public land. "Anyone can help by picking up trash, after their pets, reporting any vandalism to the BLM, and not disturbing plants and animals," said Jeff Brune, Campbell Creek Science Center manager.

Pizza and other refreshments were made available to the volunteers by National Trails Day sponsors Recreation Equipment, Inc., Diane's, and Alaska Bagel, Inc.



Top photo. Moving dirt wasn't just for adults. Toddlers also did their part during BLM's National Trails Day. Bottom photo. Acting Anchorage Field Manager **June Bailey** (middle) is helping move dirt with volunteers.

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